

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5653

As Reported By House Committee On:

Children & Family Services

Title: An act relating to investigations of public assistance fraud.

Brief Description: Transferring functions of the certified criminal justice agency within the department of social and health services to the office of the attorney general.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Gaspard, McDonald, Smith, Oke, Wojahn, Winsley, Fraser, McAuliffe, Loveland, Kohl, Spanel, Franklin, Snyder, Drew, Haugen, Hargrove, Bauer and Rasmussen).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Children & Family Services: 3/28/95, 3/30/95 [DPA].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Cooke, Chairman; Lambert, Vice Chairman; Stevens, Vice Chairman; Thibaudeau, Ranking Minority Member; Brown, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Boldt; Buck; Carrell and Tokuda.

Staff: David Knutson (786-7146).

Background: Public assistance fraud investigations are currently conducted by organizational units of the Department of Social and Health Services.

Summary of Amended Bill: The Office of Inspector General is created in the Department of Social and Health Services. The Inspector General will investigate allegations of abuse and fraud in the department's programs, except for provider fraud related to the Medicaid program. Annual reports will be made to the appropriate legislative committees on the activities of the Inspector General on January 1, 1996 and January 1, 1997. After 1997, the Inspector General will make biennial reports to the appropriate legislative committees. The Inspector General is appointed by the Governor and can be removed from office by the Governor.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: Rather than transferring fraud investigation activities from the Department of Social and Health Services to the Attorney General's Office, fraud investigation activities will be consolidated in an Inspector General's Office located in the department.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on July 1, 1995.

Testimony For: The Attorney General currently investigates Medicaid fraud. The Attorney General's Office can also investigate other forms of fraud.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator Marc Gaspard, prime sponsor; and Greg Canova, Washington State Attorney General's Office (pro).